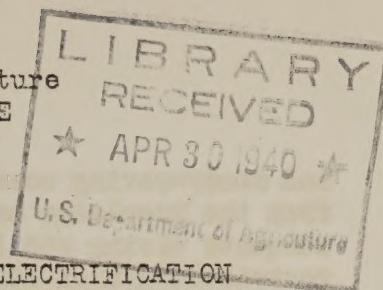


1913
C3 781
United States Department of Agriculture
EXTENSION SERVICE
Washington, D. C.



EXTENSION OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURE FOR RURAL ELECTRIFICATION
INSTRUCTION AND DEMONSTRATION FOR HOME USES*

BY

Albert V. Krewatch, Specialist in Agriculture Engineering
Extension Service, University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland

It appears that electricity in many homes and on many farms means much more to the farm family than is often appreciated by them before they get service, and for some, after they have had it for a few years. As to the home, we are all familiar with the applications by name. As to cost, many of us have said, in general, that the electric bill is not an addition to present expenses because it replaces certain other expenses for light, heat, and power that the user now pays. It is still true, however, that electricity is a cash commodity, and the monthly bill is not always paid with a smile.

It is also quite true in Maryland that about half of the families on electrified farms are not carrying out productive uses in their farming operations, and many of those are using only a few lights and limited domestic service. These reflect directly on home uses, because we realize that economic rural electrification development for the farmer or commercial agency depends in a large part on applications of electricity outside the home. Therefore, let me say without explaining that if electric lines are to reach the yet unserved and thinly populated areas of our States, home use as well as farm use must increase.

Now in our extension objectives, whether they become a part of present land use planning committee recommendations or follow good old extension methods, the principle remains the same. We may ask ourselves what is the real worth of electricity? Then let us consider the home situation. Briefly, in a consideration of the family needs, there are health, food, shelter and education, and they should come first. When the family has listed all the necessary items in the budget and have looked them over carefully they may be surprised at what a helpful part electricity can play, if intelligently used, in reducing that budget or in getting the most for their cash money available for spending. For health, food, and education there are running water for all purposes, food refrigeration and storage, eye-saving illumination, radio, and many other facilities.

Next we consider conveniences and labor-saving appliances. Their use, in large part, is directly related to income. Increased efficiency

*Presented before the Regional Extension Conference for Northeastern States, Park Central Hotel, New York City, February 29 to March 2, 1940.

and money-saving uses reflect good management. Better lighting results from the knowledge of the fundamental principles of illumination. Inadequate wiring and lighting facilities, among the important causes of restricted use of electricity, are traced to the lack of knowledge of the nature of electricity, and to factors affecting appliance operation.

Therefore, we cannot help feeling that the future belongs to the farmer and his family who will study the use of electricity, learn the fundamentals, and raise productive efficiency by making use of devices to save labor and to increase quantity and quality for the same amount of work or attention. These efforts in the home and outside of the home will naturally bring about improved conditions and will satisfy that desire for the convenience of electricity that is talked of so much. The desire for technical information and assistance on choice, uses, operation, and care of home equipment is increasing, as shown by our home demonstration agents' program.

Our Maryland rural women cooperating with the Extension Service are organized into 353 rural clubs with 10,922 members in 1939. The usual routine is for the State home demonstration agent to guide the program, which is definitely made out for a year in advance. Usually the specialist prepares the instruction and demonstration material, furnishes it to the county home demonstration agent; either the specialist or other qualified person instructs the leaders of the county clubs; the county home demonstration agent prepares material or obtains it for distribution at local club meetings by the club leaders who carry the information back to the local club. In the field of rural electrification this does not always work, because demonstration equipment is often needed and much of the information is lost in the transfer.

Here is what was accomplished by good general cooperation in the field of lighting in our 23 counties:

In 6 counties the Agricultural Engineering Specialist presented the material directly to 70 clubs, meeting in groups of 2 and 3 clubs.

In 6 counties the power company service representatives gave demonstrations to 118 clubs. These persons first attended our extension demonstrations and followed our suggestions as to presentation of material.

In 4 counties we held joint REA demonstrations for 25 clubs in groups of 2 and 3 clubs.

In 6 counties leaders were trained, and they took back the work as best they could to 92 clubs.

Also, in 7 counties, after club leader work was completed, scattered meetings were held.

The home demonstration agents are now working on refrigerators, laundry equipment, vacuum cleaners, and ranges. Sometimes groups of large and small appliances are discussed in general as requests for information come from some of the clubs.

Lighting and planning demonstrations and care and repair clinics have proved very successful even though only a limited number have been held. The lighting and planning demonstrations are held in REA areas or where new lines are being built - the care and repair and lamp modernizing clinics in areas that have been served for some time, as well as new areas. These clinics afford a splendid opportunity of pointing out good and bad features in the many kinds and types of equipment brought in for discussion and repair or suggestions for repair.

#

